

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 195698
ORIGIN SSM-05

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DRAFTED BY SSM/E:J WALLEN:MA
APPROVED BY SSM:C W KONTOS
SSM/C:L G PENDLETON, JR.

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION SINAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 195698

E.O. 11652: GDS

,AGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: PRIMARY ELECTRICAL POWER FOR SFM BASE CAMP

REF: LETTER FROM HUNT TO KONTOS DATED AUGUST ONE, 1977

1. ONE OF THE CONTINUING OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS WHICH YOU MENTIONED IN YOUR AUGUST ONE LETTER IS PRIMARY ELECTRICAL POWER FOR THE BASE CAMP. THE FAILURE RECORDS SHOW THAT THE PRIMARY PROBLEM IS RELIABILITY OF THE 500 KW ENGINE/ GENERATOR SETS. FAILURE OF THE SFM SETS HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH CATERPILLAR. ALTHOUGH CATERPILLAR IS CLOSELY MONITORING THE OPERATIONAL RECORD OF THE SFM SETS THEY HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE UNUSUALLY HIGH FAILURE RATE. THE SAME EQUIPMENT DESIGN IS USED IN SIMILAR CLIMATIC LOCATIONS WITH NORMAL FAILURE RATES WHICH ARE MUCH LOWER THAN THOSE EXPERIENCED AT SFM. CATERPILLAR HAS BEEN MOST COOPERATIVE AND GENEROUS IN TRYING TO SOLVE EQUIPMENT-RELATED PROBLEMS. MOST OF THE FAILURES HAVE BEEN REPAIRED UNDER WARRANTY; FIRST WITH ZACHRY AND NOW WITH E-SYSTEMS, ALTHOUGH THE EQUIPMENT WAS WELL BEYOND THE NORMAL WARRANTY

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PERIOD WHEN MANY OF THE FAILURES OCCURRED.

2. WE EXPECT CATERPILLAR WILL DISCONTINUE MAKING REPAIRS

UNDER WARRANTY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IF OUR FAILURE RATES CONTINUE WE WILL BE FACED WITH VERY COSTLY REPAIR BILLS AS WELL AS THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING TO RELY MORE FRE-

QUENTLY ON EMERGENCY POWER.

3. WE WOULD LIKE TO EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF BUYING POWER FROM ONE OF THE ISRAELI FACILITIES LOCATED NEAR BASE CAMP. A POWER TRANSMISSION LINE COULD BE INSTALLED FROM THE ISRAELI FACILITY TO THE BASE CAMP. THIS LINE WOULD TIE INTO THE ELECTRICAL SWITCH GEAR IN OUR POWER PLANT. WE WOULD THEN KEEP THE PRESENT SFM POWER GENERATION EQUIPMENT IN A STATE OF READINESS SO THAT SFM RETAINS THE POSSIBILITY OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY ANY TIME THE NEED SHOULD ARISE. THE ISRAELI-DERIVED POWER WOULD BE 60 HERTZ INSTEAD OF THE ISRAELI STANDARD OF 50 HERTZ. ACCORDING TO ENGINEERING PERSONNEL AT CATERPILLAR THEIR EQUIPMENT CAN BE OPERATED AT EITHER 50 OR 60 HERTZ BY MAKING RELATIVELY SIMPLE FIELD CHANGES TO THE EQUIPMENT.

4. REQUEST YOU EXPLORE WITH THE ISRAELIS THE POSSIBILITY OF PURCHASING AT A REASONABLE RATE BASE CAMP ELECTRICAL POWER FROM THEM.

5. WE ALSO SOLICIT ANY OTHER IDEAS YOU MAY HAVE ON THE SUBJECT. VANCE

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